

TargetStrategies™
Aligned Reading Strategies
Priority Academic Student Skills
8th Grade

PASS Objective: OKR081501d
Research and information: Conduct research and organize information: Accessing information: Select the best source for a given purpose, locate information relevant to research questioning: Note instances of persuasion, propaganda, and faulty reasoning in text (STANDARD 5.1d)

Focus Objective: The student will analyze a passage for instances of persuasion and propaganda, determine if the reasoning is faulty, and select a source to verify the accuracy of the information.

Genre: Nonfiction

Reading Integration: Language Arts, Oral Presentation

Level: Analysis

Prerequisite Skills:

- determine evidence from a passage that supports a conclusion (R8.9)
- determine the main idea of a nonfictional passage (R8.10)
- differentiate between the main idea and supporting ideas in a passage (R8.11)
- draw reasonable conclusions from the information in a passage (R8.12)
- identify cause-and-effect relationships in a passage (R8.13)
- identify the purpose, audience, and main idea of a passage (R8.15)
- make inferences based on stated and implied information in a passage (R8.16)
- make generalizations regarding events in a passage

(Coding refers to an applicable TargetFundamentals™ lesson.)

Related Objectives:

OKR081301a Comprehension: Interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning: Literal understanding: Apply prereading strategies when reading both fiction and nonfiction that is appropriately designed for grade level; determine the purpose for reading such as to be informed, entertained, persuaded, understand; preview the text and use prior knowledge and experience to make connections to text (STANDARD 3.1a)

- OKR081302a Comprehension: Interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning: Inferences and interpreting: Make inferences and draw conclusions supported by text evidence and student experiences (STANDARD 3.2a)
- OKR081303a Comprehension: Interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning: Summary and generalization: Determine the main (or major) idea and how those ideas are supported with specific details (STANDARD 3.3a)
- OKR081304a Comprehension: Interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning: Analysis and evaluation: Distinguish between stated fact, reasoned judgment, and opinion in various texts (STANDARD 3.4a)

INSTRUCTIONAL PREPARATION

Materials:

- chart paper (one three-foot sheet per book-club group, use for Practice)
- markers (one set per book-club group, use for Practice)

Choose or prepare the following:

- two grade-level-appropriate nonfictional passages that contain persuasion or propaganda and use faulty reasoning (use for Practice and for Assessment)

Duplicate the following (one per student unless otherwise indicated):

- *Persuasion and Propaganda* reference sheet (use for Instruction)
- “Mountain High School Speech Class” passage (use for Instruction)
- *Am I Persuaded?* handout (use for Instruction)
- “Green World Activists” passage (use for Instruction)
- the chosen passages (one per book-club-group, use for Practice; one per student, use for Assessment)

Prepare a transparency of the following:

- “Expert Dog Washing Available” passage (use for Instruction)
- *Persuasion and Propaganda* reference sheet (use for Instruction)
- *Am I Persuaded?* handout (use for Instruction)

Display the Focus Questions:

- What does a reader need to know to analyze a passage for instances of persuasion, propaganda, and faulty or sound reasoning?
- How can a reader select a source to verify the accuracy of the information?

INSTRUCTION

1. To begin the lesson, display the “Expert Dog Washing Available” transparency. Ask the following questions:
 - ✓ What is the purpose of this advertisement? *(An appropriate response is as follows: it tries to make you call The Dog Washers.)*
 - ✓ How does the author do this? *(An appropriate response is as follows: he or she tells you good things about The Dog Washers.)*
 - ✓ What reasons does the author use to get you to call The Dog Washers? *(Appropriate responses are as follows: they wash their own dog; their mail carrier says their dog looks nice; your dog will behave better and love you more after The Dog Washers wash him.)*
 - ✓ Do these reasons convince you to call The Dog Washers? *(Responses will vary; accept all reasonable responses.)*
 - ✓ What sort of information would be most useful to use to evaluate the accuracy of the flier? *(Appropriate responses are as follows: testimonies from previous customers; video of the dog washers washing a dog; picture of a dog after The Dog Washers have washed it.)*

Use the responses to facilitate a discussion to show that there are many attempts every day to get people to do something. Point out that when we watch television, listen to the radio, read advertisements, or even listen to people we know, we make decisions whether to agree with what we see or hear. It is important that we understand some of the ways that people attempt to persuade us. It is also important that we determine the accuracy of the information.

2. Distribute copies of the *Persuasion and Propaganda* reference sheet and display the transparency. Read aloud and discuss the information in the box at the top of the page. Explain that persuasion is neither good nor bad but is simply the process of making others agree with you. Explain that propaganda is persuasion done on a much larger scale and is intended to influence more people. However, in both cases, it is up to the reader to determine whether the information being given uses faulty or sound reasoning and to check the accuracy of the information.
3. Direct the student’s attention to the rest of the information on the reference sheet. Choose volunteers to read aloud the information in the boxes. Explain to the students that these are just a few of the techniques an author may use in persuasion and propaganda and that it is important to determine whether the reasoning is faulty or sound as well as to check the accuracy of the information.
4. Tell the students that in today’s lesson they will read two passages to identify examples of the techniques used in persuasion and propaganda, determine whether the reasoning is faulty or sound, and determine a source of information that could be used to evaluate the accuracy of the information.

5. Ask the first focus question. Give the students time to think about it. Facilitate a discussion that leads to the understanding that in order to analyze a passage for persuasion, propaganda, and faulty or sound reasoning, a reader needs to determine

- ✓ the purpose of the passage,
- ✓ the size of the audience the author is trying to reach,
- ✓ whether the author uses exaggerated statements,
- ✓ whether the author makes conclusions based on a few examples,
- ✓ whether the author connects a famous person to the product or action,
- ✓ whether the author shows partiality to one side of an issue or group of people,
- ✓ whether the reasons being given are logical.

Explain to the students that although the author of a passage using persuasion or propaganda states his or her information as facts, it is also important to select a source of information that would validate the accuracy of the information. Ask the following question:

- ✓ What sources are available to check the accuracy of information? *(Responses will vary, accept all reasonable responses.)*

Discuss the responses. Use the responses to emphasize the variety of sources that can be used to check the accuracy of information in a passage, pointing out that the source being used needs to be credible.

6. Ask the second focus question. Give the students time to think about it. Facilitate a discussion that leads to the understanding that to select a source that shows the accuracy of the information, a reader needs to

- ✓ understand the information in the passage,
- ✓ understand the kinds of sources available to check the accuracy of the information,
- ✓ locate a source that gives information about the topic,
- ✓ determine the credibility of that source.

7. Distribute copies of the “Mountain High School Speech Class” passage. Read aloud the passage as the students read along silently. Ask the following questions:

- ✓ What is the purpose of this passage? *(An appropriate response is as follows: to persuade people to go to college.)*
- ✓ What audience is the author trying to reach? *(The speech class)*
- ✓ Is this an example of persuasion or propaganda? *(Persuasion)*
- ✓ How does the author achieve his purpose? *(Appropriate responses are as follows: by making exaggerated statements; by making conclusions based on a few examples; by showing partiality to one side of the issue and to one group of people.)*

8. Distribute copies of the *Am I Persuaded?* handout and display the transparency. Then ask the following questions:
 - ✓ In what sentence does the author use hyperbole? (*An appropriate response is as follows: "Become a wealthy, intelligent, healthy, employed, contributing citizen like all the college graduates you know."*)
 - ✓ Does the author use faulty or sound reasoning? (*Faulty*)
 - ✓ How do you know this? (*An appropriate response is as follows: this is an exaggeration because this does not apply to all college graduates.*)

Discuss the responses for accuracy and model on the transparency how to write the appropriate responses in the boxes on the handout. Have the students do the same on their copy of the handout.

9. Repeat this procedure for the remainder of the handout. Refer to the Teacher's Answer Key for suggested responses.
10. Have the students get into pairs. Distribute copies of the "Green World Activists" passage. Tell the students to read the passage and create and complete on a sheet of notebook paper a graphic organizer similar to the one used for the "Mountain High School Speech Class" passage. Remind the students that each is responsible for completing his or her own graphic organizer.
11. When the students have finished the task, return to a whole-group setting. Ask volunteers to share their responses. Discuss the responses for accuracy. Refer to the Teacher's Answer Key for suggested responses.
12. To conclude instruction, ask the students to think about the following questions:
 - ✓ What techniques can an author use in persuasion and propaganda?
 - ✓ How can a reader determine whether the reasoning is logical?
 - ✓ How can a reader determine the accuracy of the information?

Based on the responses, facilitate a brief discussion to show that an author may use many techniques to make a reader agree with his or her opinion, but a reader should determine whether the reasoning used is accurate and logical.

Alternative Instruction:

- Choose a grade-level-appropriate nonfictional passage that contains persuasion or propaganda and uses faulty reasoning. Distribute copies of the *Persuasion and Propaganda* reference sheet. Read aloud and discuss the information in each box. Distribute copies of the chosen passage. Read aloud the passage as the students read along silently. Ask a volunteer to identify an example in the passage of one of the persuasive techniques, then state which technique is being used, whether the reasoning is sound or faulty, and what resource they might use to check the accuracy of the information. Create on a transparency a *Concept Web* (see *Webbing with Literature* in the Appendix). Write in the center circle

the phrase from the passage. In connecting circles, write the technique being used, whether the reasoning is sound or faulty, and the resource that might be used to check the information. Have the students copy the web on a sheet of notebook paper. Repeat this procedure with the remaining examples in the passage. When all examples have been identified, facilitate a discussion to show that before a reader decides whether the information in a passage using persuasion or propaganda is accurate, he or she must identify the persuasive technique, determine whether the reasoning is faulty or sound, and decide on a source that could be used to evaluate the accuracy of the information.

PRACTICE

1. Have the students get into their book-club groups. Distribute copies of the chosen passage to each group. Tell the students to read the passage and discuss whether it is an example of persuasion or propaganda and what techniques the author uses.
2. Distribute the chart paper and markers. Have the students work collaboratively to create and complete on the chart paper an organizer similar to the handout that was used in the Instruction component for the passage they just read.
3. When the students have completed the task, display the chart papers on a classroom wall. Ask a volunteer from each group to explain one of the techniques used and whether the reasoning in the technique was faulty or sound. Discuss the responses for accuracy and repeat this procedure until each technique has been discussed. Then ask a volunteer to share what source would be useful in evaluating the accuracy of the information in the passage. Discuss the response for accuracy.
4. Facilitate a discussion that shows that knowing the techniques used in persuasion and propaganda, determining whether the reasoning is faulty or sound, and identifying a source that would be useful to evaluate the accuracy of the passage is important in deciding the effectiveness of the passage.

Alternative Practice:

- Have the students get into three-person groups, and distribute to each group a copy of a grade-level-appropriate nonfictional passage that contains examples of persuasion or propaganda and faulty reasoning. Tell the students to read the passage and identify the persuasive techniques used. Tell them to create on a sheet of notebook paper a *Concept Web* similar to the one created in the Alternative Instruction component using the examples from the passage. When the groups have finished, ask a volunteer to explain one of his or her group's webs. Discuss the response for accuracy. Repeat this procedure for the remaining webs. Then facilitate a discussion about persuasion and propaganda, the techniques an author can use, how to determine whether the reasoning is faulty or sound, and how to decide on a source to use to evaluate the accuracy of the information in the passage.

ASSESSMENT

- Have the students read the chosen passage. Prepare several multiple-choice questions in the following manner (four choices):
 - ✓ The author shows that (idea) by
 - ✓ Which statement shows evidence of the author's bias?
 - ✓ How does the author persuade the reader to (action)?
 - ✓ Which phrase/sentence/statement shows evidence of (persuasion/propaganda/faulty reasoning)?
 - ✓ What information would be most useful to evaluate the accuracy of this passage?

Alternative Assessment:

- Choose a grade-level-appropriate nonfictional passage that contains persuasion or propaganda and uses faulty reasoning, and have the students read it. Prepare several multiple-choice questions in the following manner (four choices):
 - ✓ How can a reader choose a source to evaluate the accuracy of the information in a passage?
 - ✓ Which statement shows evidence of the author's use of techniques to persuade?
 - ✓ Which statement shows evidence of faulty reasoning?

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Persuasion and Propaganda

Persuasion: presenting an argument or an opinion in order to convince the reader to accept the writer's point of view. The reasoning may be sound or faulty.

Propaganda: using persuasion to convince large numbers of people

hyperbole

using exaggerated statements to prove your point

He displayed amazingly wonderful artistic talents.

generalization

drawing conclusions based on a few examples

All women are good cooks.

testimonial

connecting a well-known person or organization with a product or action

Ron Kite, from *Today's Cook* television show, uses only Hampton oil.

bias

showing a partiality to one side of an issue or group of people

The basketball coach knew his team was the better team.

Faulty Reasoning: using improper logic to form conclusions, inferences, or judgments

Check the Accuracy of the Information: determine sources that are credible, would give specific information about the topic, and would confirm the information in the passage

Mountain High School Speech Class

speech given by Anthony Spears, sophomore

I have respect only for people who graduate from college. But I was surprised when an elderly friend recently told me how her father had felt about his children going to college. She said that her father had insisted that her brother go to college. Her father thought his son needed a degree to support himself and his future family in a proper way. Surprisingly, her father had also insisted that she attend college. However, it was for an entirely different reason. He had felt that it was the best place for his daughter to find the type of husband he wanted her to have.

Thank goodness most fathers today want both sons and daughters to go to college. A young person from a family in which everyone attends college just takes it for granted that he or she will go to college. A young person from a family in which no one has yet attended college often knows how much it means to his or her family that he or she go to college. Going to college is a good way to please your family and make them love you.

Every college graduate has a rich, healthy future. But how should you decide whether college is right for you? Here are a few facts that might help you make up your mind.

Avoid Unemployment. Graduates are less likely to be laid off. Their broad education gives them more flexibility in adjusting to the job market.

Better Retirement. Graduates continue to earn good salaries until retirement, and other workers earn less as they grow older.

Better Health. Graduates often report their health as excellent and are less likely to smoke cigarettes. Both of my friends who are college graduates are in great health.

Greater Knowledge. Graduates understand progress and new developments in science because they are able to think abstractly, express their thoughts clearly in speech and in writing, and make wise decisions.

More Money. Someone who graduates from high school earns more money than someone who doesn't. Someone with a two-year degree earns more than someone who graduated from high school. Someone with a four-year degree earns more than someone with a two-year degree, etc.

Brain Power, Not Muscle Power. Many jobs rely on new technology and already require employees to use their brain instead of their muscles.

A Responsible Citizen. Graduates are more active in the community, the nation, and the world. They consider citizenship an important responsibility.

The U.S. Census Bureau stated in a 2002 report that someone with a bachelor's degree can expect to earn much more than someone who doesn't go to college. A graduate will earn \$2.1 million in their lifetime—at least \$900,000 more than someone who does not attend college. All these facts should help you decide to go to college. Become a wealthy, intelligent, healthy, employed, contributing citizen like all the college graduates you know.

Name _____

Am I Persuaded?

hyperbole:

faulty/sound reasoning?

I know this because

generalization:

faulty/sound reasoning?

I know this because

testimonial:

faulty/sound reasoning?

I know this because

bias:

faulty/sound reasoning?

I know this because

What information could I check to evaluate the accuracy of this selection?

Green World Activists

Our wonderful, luscious, green world as we know it will not be around much longer. Everything green will be depleted and ruined. I am absolutely convinced of this. All you concerned American citizens should be, too. It is time for all Americans to take an active part in protecting the country in which we live. Here is a list of the devastating problems we are facing:

- ✓ Plants and animals native to America are becoming extinct because of the building of numerous new roads and highways. This has already happened in my hometown.
- ✓ Minerals in the soil are being depleted because of poor planting methods and farmers not bothering to rotate their crops.
- ✓ The food sold in large supermarkets is causing people to be less healthy because of the insecticides and drugs used to encourage quick growth and quick profits.

The president of the United States wants to help, and he encourages groups such as ours to become active in recruiting concerned citizens to promote this cause. The farmers and business leaders of this country are in the wrong and must be prohibited from continuing these harmful procedures. Senators and congressmen from each state back this project. They are willing to pass laws to stop this incredible destruction.

We can change things if we all act together. We can increase the wealth and health of every American if we take the proper steps.

We cannot allow this tragedy to continue! Join your fellow Americans! Feel proud that you are part of the solution and not part of the problem.

Join your local chapter of Green World Activists.
I am a member of this worthwhile organization because I know that Green World Activists are the only ones who can solve this problem.

TEACHER'S ANSWER KEY

Am I Persuaded?

“Mountain High School Speech Class”

hyperbole: “Become a wealthy, intelligent, healthy, employed, contributing citizen like all the college graduates you know.”

faulty reasoning

I know this because this is an exaggeration, as all these things might not become true.

generalization: “Every college graduate has a rich, healthy future.”

faulty reasoning

I know this because this is not true for all college graduates.

testimonial: “The U.S. Census Bureau stated in a 2002 report that someone with a bachelor’s degree can expect to earn much more than someone who doesn’t go to college.”

sound reasoning

I know this because it is a statistic given by the U.S. Census Bureau.

bias: “I have respect only for people who graduate from college.”

faulty reasoning

I know this because it is showing preference for one group of people who may not all be alike.

What information could I check to evaluate the accuracy of this selection?

Check career books to see the average salaries of graduates and nongraduates.

“Green World Activists”

hyperbole: “Everything green will be depleted and ruined.”

faulty reasoning

I know this is an exaggeration because not everything will be depleted and ruined.

generalization: “This has already happened in my home town.”

faulty reasoning

I know this because only one example is given.

testimonial: “The president of the United States wants to help, and he encourages groups such as ours to become active in recruiting concerned citizens to promote this cause.”

sound reasoning

I know this because many people value the president’s opinion.

bias: “I am a member of this worthwhile organization because I know that Green World Activists are the only ones who can solve this problem.”

faulty reasoning

I know this because the author won’t consider other ideas and ways to improve the world.

What information could I check to evaluate the accuracy of this selection?

Check statistics on methods farmers use, the damage being done by building roads and highways, and the healthiness of food sold in major supermarkets, and contact your senator and congressperson to see if they approve of this group.